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like relegation. When proof of insanity ceased to be ground for absolute acquittal, the advantage of setting it up became less obvious. The United States have retained the old common law, and its inconveniences are illustrated in the Thaw case by an application towards the end of a criminal trial for an inquisition in lunacy to decide questions which should have been determined in limine or as part of the trial.

To an English lawyer the Thaw trial reads like a travesty or abuse of the common-law procedure. The judge seems unable to restrain the conflicting energies of the numerous lawyers on each side who exercise a claim to equality characteristically democratic in raising distinct and conflicting pleas. A hypothetical question of 15,000 words is allowed to be fired at a medical witness, and arguments are raised as to the "unwritten law" which is supposed to entitle a man to slay anyone who at any time has inflicted a wrong on one of his female relatives, while vexed questions of brain-storm and other new-fangled forms of mental unsoundness are dragged in at intervals till the whole proceeding seems like a mock trial prepared for the entertainment of the curious in mental abnormalities rather than a judicial investigation into a question of fact. Comparison of the two systems indicates that the English system, with its modern improvements, coupled with the effective control of the presiding judge, affords the better means of vindicating public justice in a manner becoming the dignity of the offended law. And when it is remembered that a verdict in the American trial may be followed by appeals ad saecula saeculorum, it becomes evident that law reforms are urgently needed across the Atlantic in the interests of Law, which, in the end, are always in the interests of the sovereign people. *Salus populi suprema lex.*

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## IN VACATION

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### He Was up to Date.

Thomas Jones, a citizen of dusky hue, was in the dock at the police court a day or two ago to answer a charge of stealing an overcoat. In weren't no use fo' Thomas to try to slop off the coat and blame fol the whole occurrence, because he was wearing the pilfered garment when arrested.

"Why did you take it?" queried the judge, as the prisoner was arraigned and, perforce, pleaded guilty.

"I cayn't tell yo' fo' sure, please yer Onner, exceptin' I'se got temperery insanity and the unwritten law."—Washington Star.

**His Weapon.**

Magistrate (to accused)—“Your wife says you beat her with a handkerchief, but how did you manage to disfigure her like this with such a thing?”

Husband—“Well, you see, sir, my fist was inside the handkerchief.”—*Nos Loisirs.*

**Getting Even with Lawyers.**

Overshrewd lawyers often furnish their adversaries with weapons. “Did you see this tree that has been mentioned by the roadside?” an advocate inquired.

“Yes, sir, I saw it very plainly.”

“It was conspicuous, then?”

The witness seemed puzzled by the new word. He repeated his former assertion.

“What’s the difference,” sneered the lawyer, “between plain and conspicuous?”

But he was hoist with his own petard. The witness innocently answered:

“I can see you plainly, sir, among the other lawyers, though you are not a bit conspicuous.”

In another witness a blow directed against the character of a witness forcibly recoiled.

“You were in the company of these people?” he was asked.

“Of two friends, sir.”

“Friends; two thieves, I suppose you mean.”

“That may be true,” was the dry retort, “they are both lawyers.”

The blow that destroys the effect of an adverse examination is occasionally more the result of accident than of conscious effort. In a trial not long ago a very simple witness was in the box, and after going through his ordeal was ready to retire. One question remained.

“Now, Mr. ——, has not an attempt been made to induce you to tell the court a different story?”

“A different story to what I have told, sir?”

“Yes. Is it not so?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Upon your oath, I demand to know who the persons are who have attempted this.”

“Well, sir, you’ve tried as hard as any of ‘em,” was the unexpected answer.

It ended the examination.